

Convention. As we start a new century the principles and objectives of the Convention are an important international norm serving to prevent any country from developing, producing, stockpiling or obtaining the means to employ bacteriological, biological or toxin weapons as a means of warfare. As such the Convention remains one of the key elements of international security and stability.

At its inception the Convention was a watershed international document, the first formal multilateral agreement to forswear an entire class of weapons of mass destruction. Twenty five years later 143 States have acceded to it, a remarkable endorsement of the principles which it encompasses, and of the very important role it plays in the web of non-proliferation and arms control treaties. We, as the Depositaries, take this opportunity to call on those states which have not yet ratified or acceded to the BWC to do so without delay, so that the prohibitions on possession and development of biological weapons become even more universal.

The representatives of many States Parties are now engaged in work to strengthen the Convention. The aim is a Protocol that will create a regime to enhance confidence in compliance with the fundamental objectives of the Convention. This effort will bring the Convention into better alignment with the principles of other arms control agreements. As the terms of the mandate given to the Ad Hoc Group make clear the objective is "to consider appropriate measures, including possible verification measures . . . to be included, as appropriate, in a legally binding instrument." Successful achievement of an effective Protocol within the agreed time-frame must be the target of all States Parties. We pledge our own efforts to achieving this goal, and call upon all other States Parties to do likewise, and to accede to the Protocol once it is agreed.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

**Message to the Congress
Transmitting a Report on
Telecommunications
Payments to Cuba**

March 27, 2000

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 1705(e)(6) of the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992, 22 U.S.C. 6004(e)(6), as amended by section 102(g) of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996, Public Law 104-114, 110 Stat. 785, I transmit herewith a semiannual report "detailing payments made to Cuba . . . as a result of the provision of telecommunications services" pursuant to Department of the Treasury specific licenses.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
March 27, 2000.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

**Message to the Congress
Transmitting a Report on the
National Emergency With
Respect to Angola (UNITA)**

March 27, 2000

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) that was declared in Executive Order 12865 of September 26, 1993.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
March 27, 2000.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Remarks Following Discussions With President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt and an Exchange With Reporters

March 28, 2000

President Clinton. Let me begin by saying that I am delighted to have President Mubarak back here. We have a lot to discuss today. I want to talk with him about the peace process in the Middle East, about the movement on the Palestinian track, about my meeting with President Asad, and what further steps he thinks we could take on the Israel-Syria track. And we have a lot of other things to discuss as well.

So I'm looking forward to this meeting, and I want to welcome you here, Mr. President.

President Mubarak. Thank you, sir.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. President Mubarak, the peace process seems to be faltering again, especially after the failure of the Geneva talks. What is your vision, Mr. President? What can Egypt do in order to break this deadlock?

President Mubarak. First of all, I thank President Clinton just for meeting me today. And we used to exchange views every now and then. We have very good relations with the President since he took office 8 years ago.

Today we are going to discuss so many issues about the Middle East, about even bilateral relations. And concerning the Geneva meeting, I cannot say that's a failure. It's a step forward, although no progress between the Israelis and the Syrians, that doesn't make us pessimistic. We have to make much more effort so as to reach peace and an agreement could be signed, for the welfare of the whole area.

Oil Prices

Q. Mr. President, there's word out of Vienna that OPEC has reached a deal now. Are you now looking forward to a decline in oil?

President Clinton. Have they, in fact, announced that?

Q. The Venezuelan representative has.

President Clinton. Well, first of all, I think I ought to wait to issue a definitive comment until they actually vote and reach

an agreement. But my concern has always been that the oil price production be increased to a level sufficient to ensure continued growth in the global economy and continued growth here at home. And that, therefore, by definition, to alleviate some of the serious burdens that some of our people have felt, particularly the truckers and the people who commute long distances.

But I want to wait and see. I've heard some encouraging things about what OPEC will do in combination with what some of the non-OPEC members will do. And in the aggregate, it could be sufficient to get production and consumption back into alignment and to rebuild some of these stocks, which are at their lowest point in a decade. And if that happens, then I'll be encouraged, but I want to wait and see.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. President Clinton, how much faith do you have in peace being concluded before you leave your tenure here?

President Clinton. Well, I think we are making and will continue to see good progress between the Israelis and Palestinians. I went to Switzerland to meet President Asad, to clarify to him what I thought the options were and to hear from him what his needs are. I asked him to come back to me with what he thought ought to be done. So the ball is in his court now, and I'm going to look forward to hearing from him, and we're going to talk about what else I can do, what else we can do together.

President Mubarak has been at this longer than I have, and we're going to keep working.

Q. President Clinton, your term ends in a few months now. Do you think the Israelis are ready to go along and finalize the peace process during that period? And what do you think the steps that they are going to take? For President Mubarak, do you foresee a solution in the near future?

President Clinton. Well, I think they are making very serious efforts. And I think Prime Minister Barak would like to do this as quickly as he can. And I can tell you they have made very, very serious efforts on all tracks, and I think you will continue to see progress at least on the Palestinian track and, of course, I hope we'll have some progress